

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Previously Presented) A method for streaming a streaming media file from a server to a client player for consumption of the steaming media file at the client player, the method comprising:
transmitting a metering uniform resource locator (URL) from a first server to a client player over a network;
streaming the streaming media file from a second server to the client player over the network;
receiving an embedded metering event in the streaming media file, wherein a target of the metering URL is a user meter configured to meter receipt of the embedded metering event; and
ticking the user meter in the first server based on receipt of the streaming media file and the embedded metering event.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the metering URL is communicated over a first network link and the streaming media file is communicated over a second network link.
3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the metering URL and the streaming media file are communicated over a network link.
4. (Original) The method of claim 2 further comprising communicating a client media player from the first server to the client player.
5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the ticking step occurs in the first server.
6. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising:
appending a representation of the encountered embedded metering event to the metering URL to form an appended representation;
communicating the appended representation from the client player to the first server; and
decrementing a user account based on the appended representation.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6 further comprising stopping the streaming step if the appended representation is not communicated from the client player to the first server within a predetermined time.
8. (Original) The method of claim 6 further comprising signing the metering URL with a message authentication code (MAC).
9. (Original) The method of claim 8 further comprising:
verifying the authenticity of the URL in the first server; and
stopping the streaming step if the URL is not verified.
10. (Original) The method of claim 8 wherein the MAC is an MD5 hash or a SHA1 hash.
11. (Previously presented) A computer program product stored on a computer-readable storage medium for streaming steaming media file to a client media player, the computer program product comprising:
code for transmitting a metering uniform resource locator (URL) from a first server to a client player over a network;
code for streaming the streaming media file from a second server to the client player over the network;
code for receiving an embedded metering event in the streaming media file, wherein a target of the metering URL is a user meter configured to meter receipt of the embedded metering event;
and
code for ticking a user meter in the first server based on receipt of the streaming media file and the embedded metering event.
12. (Original) The computer program product of claim 11 wherein the metering URL is communicated over a first network link and the streaming media file is communicated over a second network link.
13. (Original) The computer program product of claim 11 wherein the metering URL and the streaming media file are communicated over a network link.

14. (Original) The computer program product of claim 12 further comprising code for communicating a client media player from the first server to the client player.
15. (Original) The computer program product of claim 11 wherein the code for ticking executes in the first server.
16. (Original) The computer program product of claim 11 further comprising:
 - code for appending a representation of the encountered embedded metering event to the metering URL to form an appended representation;
 - code for communicating the appended representation from the client player to the first server; and
 - code for decrementing a user account based on the appended representation.
17. (Original) The computer program product of claim 16 further comprising code for stopping the code for streaming from executing if the appended representation is not communicated from the client player to the first server within a predetermined time.
18. (Original) The computer program product of claim 16 further comprising signing the metering URL with a message authentication code (MAC).
19. (Original) The computer program product of claim 18 further comprising:
 - code for verifying the authenticity of the URL in the first server; and
 - code for stopping the code for streaming from executing if the URL is not verified.
20. (Original) The computer program product of claim 18 wherein the MAC is an MD5 hash or a SHA1 hash.
21. (Previously presented) A method for streaming a streaming media file to a client player, the method comprising:
 - transmitting a metering uniform resource locator (URL) from a first server to a client player over a network, wherein a target of the metering URL is a user meter;
 - streaming the streaming media file from the first server to the client player over the network;

receiving an embedded metering event embedded in the streaming media file; and
ticking the user meter in a second server based on receipt of the embedded metering event.

22. (Currently Amended) A streaming media system for streaming a streaming media file from a server to a client browser for consumption of the steaming media file at the client browser, the system comprising:

a client browser configured to tick a user meter;

a first server configured to communicate a metering uniform resource locator (URL) from the first server to the client browser over a network, wherein a target of the metering URL is the user meter at a network location other than the client browser; and

a second server configured to communicate a streaming media file from the second server to the client browser over the network; wherein the streaming media file includes at least one embedded metering event at a selected time location within the streaming media file; and wherein the client browser is configured to tick the user meter in response to receiving the metering URL from the first server and the at least one embedded metering event from the second server.

23. (Original) The system of claim 22 further comprising a third server configured to generate the user meter.

24. (Original) The system of claim 22 wherein the client browser includes a client media player configured to play the streaming media file; and wherein the client media player playing the streaming media file encounters the embedded metering event and appends the embedded metering event to the metering URL.

25. (Original) The system of claim 24 wherein:

the client browser is configured to append the embedded metering event to the metering URL to form an appended representation and communicate the appended representation to the first server; and

the first server is configured to decrements a user account.

26. (Original) The system of claim 22 wherein the metering URL is signed with a message authentication code (MAC).

27. (Original) The system of claim 26 wherein the MAC is an MD5 hash, a SHA1 hash, or a ghost key.

28. (Currently Amended) A streaming media system wherein a media presentation is streamed to a client system while tracking usage of the media presentation by the client system, the system comprising:

a client player that is configured to present to a user a streamed media presentation;

a streaming server configured to transfer the streamed media presentation to the client player, including embedded metering events represented by data in the streamed media presentation, wherein the embedded metering events are dispersed at select time locations in the streamed media presentation;

an extractor, at the client system, configured to extract embedded metering events from the streamed media presentations and send them to a usage meter;

logic at the usage meter configured to adjust a user account based on received-metering events; and

control logic configured to discontinue the media presentation if predetermined criteria for one or more of the media presentations and the user account are not met.

29. (Previously Presented) A method for streaming a streaming media file for consumption of the steaming media file by a client player, the method comprising:

transmitting a metering uniform resource locator (URL) to the client player over a network, wherein a target of the metering URL is a user meter at a network location other than the client and wherein the user meter meters consumption of the streaming media file by the client player;

embedding a metering indicator in the streaming media file to create an embedded streaming media file;

streaming the embedded streaming media file to the client player over the network;

receiving at the user meter the embedded metering indicator appended to the metering URL;
and

ticking the user meter server based on receipt of the embedded metering indicator.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 29, further comprising:

verifying an authenticity of the metering URL that is received at the user meter, based on at least one message authentication code (MAC) applied to at least one of the following; the metering URL and the embedded metering indicator appended to the metering URL; and

stopping the streaming step if the metering URL is not verified.